

United States Department of Agriculture

Soil Conservation Service

St. Paul, Minnesota

## Fugle's Mill Plant Materials Evaluation Site



## **Working With Plants for Conservation Uses**

### Purpose

The Fugle's Mill Plant Materials Evaluation Site consists of 40 acres where a variety of plants are grown and evaluated for conservation purposes in southeastern Minnesota.

Conservation plants, including grasses, legumes, shrubs, and trees, must be able to tolerate ice, snow, rain, wind, drought, and heat in Minnesota.

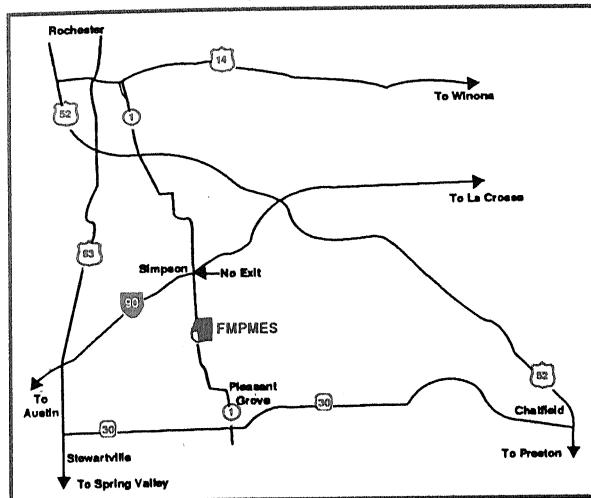
Project sponsors evaluate, develop, and release to commercial nurseries and seed producers improved plant materials for erosion control, forage production, forest products, and wildlife habitat. In addition to offering the public information and education, the sponsors provide technical assistance.

### Location

The plant demonstration area is located on Olmsted County Highway No. 1 within the Fugle's Mill Unit of the Richard J. Dorer Memorial Hardwood State Forest...about 6 miles south of Rochester, Minnesota, off U.S. Highway No. 52, and about 4 miles north of State Highway No. 30.

## Fugle's Mill Plant Materials Evaluation Site (FMPMES)

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(FMPMES)



### Learning Opportunities

Not unlike an arboretum, this site is a place where farmers, sport and wildlife groups, teachers, students, and other citizens can see and learn about different species and varieties of warm season grasses, cover crops, shrubs, and trees useful for conservation.

Visitors will see 148 12- by 60-foot plots of 37 different warm-season grasses, including:

- 7 varieties of Big bluestem;
- 4 varieties of Little bluestem;
- 4 varieties of Sideoats grama;
- 10 varieties of Switchgrass;
- 5 varieties of Indiangrass;
- 3 varieties of Prairie sandreed;
- 4 other species and varieties.

## **Challenges**

Agriculture has changed dramatically in the past 50 years. The pressures these changes have put on soil and water resources can be managed by developing and implementing new technology to minimize or eliminate negative impacts to our natural resources. The plant materials program serves a vital role in developing and applying new technology to meet critical challenges related to:

- water quality;
- sustainable, low-input agriculture production;
- vegetative terraces;
- reclaimed pasture and woodland sites infested with noxious weeds; and,
- air quality through planting shrubs and trees.

## Sponsors

The Fugle's Mill Plant Materials Evaluation Site, established through a cooperative agreement in 1985, is sponsored by the:

- Southeastern Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts;
- Olmsted Soil and Water Conservation District;
- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources-Division of Forestry;
- U.S. Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service; and,
- Hiawatha Valley Resource Conservation and Development Area.

Many other public agencies, organizations, private businesses, and individuals are also providing technical assistance and/or financial support.

The Plant Materials Site coordinates its work with that of the Soil Conservation Service's Plant Materials Center (PMC) at Bismarck, North Dakota, which serves Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota. The PMC provides technical assistance, planting plans and design service, plant materials stock, performance evaluation services, and equipment.

## **Technical Assistance Service**

For technical assistance on vegetative solutions to conservation problems, contact the local office of your Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), the Soil Conservation Service (SCS), or the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Division of Forestry.

## **Volunteer Opportunities**

Volunteers are needed to help manage the Fugle's Mill Plant Materials Evaluation Site. For more information, contact your local SWCD, SCS, or DNR office, or dial 1-800-THE-SOIL.



All program and services of the Fugle's Mill Plant Materials Evaluation Site sponsors are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status, or handicap.

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## **Goals**

The Fugle's Mill Plant Materials Evaluation Site is dedicated to:

- planting and evaluating a variety of plants that will serve conservation needs in southeastern Minnesota;
- developing and exchanging information and technology about new plants;
- demonstrating how trees and shrubs can be used in farmstead and field windbreaks, wildlife plantings, and timber production;
- demonstrating warm season grasses used for hayland, pastureland, rangeland, and wildlife habitat;
- providing information and educational programs to users of plant materials; and,
- providing technical assistance and services to landusers through soil and water conservation districts and cooperating agencies.

They will also see among the 74 species of trees and shrubs being evaluated:

- Black walnut
- White pine
- Norway pine
- Norway spruce
- White poplar
- White cedar
- Douglas fir
- Manchurian crabapple
- Willow
- Autumn olive
- Serviceberry
- Lilac

We hope that visitors to the Plant Materials Site will become more aware and knowledgeable about the conservation uses for plants evaluated and inquire about obtaining plants for conservation uses in order to:

- reduce soil erosion;
- increase wildlife and wildlife habitat;
- plan effective farmstead and field windbreaks; and,
- manage productive woodlands.